

Strawberry Valley B

Utah National Guard sends hundreed

BY JOSHUA K. JONES
Wave Staff Writer

6-14-00

An elaborate war is being fought in Wasatch County by the Utah National Guard. The 1457 Engineer and Combat Battalion is constructing roads and bridges in order for troops to get to the front lines, while others soldiers are surveilancing the land for the enemy, an elaborate mission to protect the... Kosovars? Well, a simulated war in Strawberry Valley involving hundreds of soldiers who do not-so-simulated work, is one of the largest Utah National Guard training exercises and it is taking place in your backyard.

All part of a national training exercise dubbed Global Patriot, battalions are feverishly working on projects in Park City and Strawberry Valley. Both projects serve two functions: training to the Guard, and service to other entities. Lieutenant Colonel Craig Morgan said, "What we are doing is getting good wartime training, and at the same time helping out the state on projects that wouldn't get done without us."

In Strawberry Valley the Guard's role is two fold: protect the operations from simulated enemy fire and construct a log building for a Youth Correction Facility, lay 4,300 feet of water line,

grade 20 miles of road, and improve nine parking lots. With 840 hours of combined use large equipment the Guard has moved over 6,000 cubic yards of road base material. This has all been accomplished in a relatively short ten days. When the operation is finished tomorrow crews hope to have the cabin at the Youth Corrections finished and to have

able to accomplish twice that many. Some of the projects they are completing include doubling the capacity of two trailheads, grading Strawberry River Road, Trout Creek Road and Jakes Bay Road. They have also expanded the parking lot at the Ladders, a popular fishing spot, along with several other projects.

The park and ride being constructed between the first exit to Park City and Silver Creek Junction on Highway 40 is an 80 acre transfer station being prepared for the Olympics. The project is "Some people thought building a mall," said . The project has moved over cubic yards of dirt with 5 of army bulldozers, scrap tankers. Morgan said the be returned to its natural after the Olympics are over when the Guard pulls Strawberry, the camp used to house and feed troops will be reseeded returned to the way it before they arrived a short ten days earlier.

saved the Forest Service a conservative estimate of \$112,000, though some project the number hundreds of thousands more. Al Pulham, District Facility Manager said, "We wouldn't have been able to do it without them."

Though they committed to seven projects, the Guard has been



In order to mock a battle and this one is being simulated down to secret codes and points, the National Guard train with unloaded M-16 automatic guns and gas masks of biological warfare. After elite group, known as Op represent the opposing could strike at any time. T

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Sergeant David Liddle of the Utah National Guard protects the Tactical Operations Center from the Op-4, the opposing forces. top: Chief Warrant Officer David Whittaker waits on a hastily constructed heli-pad for lift off.

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-Al Pulham
District Facility Manager

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ed' soldier's gun inoperable. The laser system is also hooked up to vehicles which when shot instantly stop running. "Its all 100 percent pretend," reassures Tactical Operations Center, Major Milada Copeland, who is trying to use Strawberry as a mini-Kosovo.

"Here we can train in new terrain and work on many different

challenging projects, thereby increasing our military effectiveness," said Copeland. She said the encampment has all the amenities of home, even fax and copy machines in the middle of nowhere. The operation has used 7700 gallons of fuel and 3200 gallons of water, they have served 3460 hot meals. Lt. Col. Bruce Frandsen agreed that training had all the comforts of home, "except my wife."

The 1457 Battalion is one of the President's High Priority Units and is headquartered in American Fork. The total strength of the battalion is over 500 soldiers.

Utah Pi

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